An aspiring journalist should gain experience, building relationships, and testing career choices through internships. Students should develop a portfolio of creative materials related to career goals. Demonstrate enthusiasm, interpersonal skills, team work, integrity, good judgment, and intelligence as well as developing excellent writing and grammar skills. Seek skills and experiences in different and “not your typical” areas to qualify for a wider range of opportunities. Be prepared to begin a journalism career in a small market, performing general duties, before moving to larger markets and positions with more creative freedom and responsibility. Minoring in business administration, political science, technical communication, or natural sciences, sport management, cinema studies, or art media may provide greater job opportunities and complement the major.

As the industry is tightening, applicants who have experience in a niche market, (e.g., religious publishing, or outstanding technical skills), will be more competitive. Journalism is good preparation for graduate programs in communication, law, political science, and other fields that require strong writing skills. Pick electives in a variety of subjects as you may be asked to cover stories on many topics. Develop a strong background in photography, as that component is becoming more prevalent in reporting and familiarize yourself with the on-the-go mobile video and audio applications to effectively communicate live updates. Finally, stay up to date with current events.

**AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY**

- **Writing**
  - Reporting
  - Editorial/column writing
  - Feature writing
  - Investigative journalism
  - Sports
  - Online journalism
  - Photo journalism
  - Editing
  - Marketing/promotion
  - Production
- **Advertising/sales**
- **Promotion**
- **Circulation**
- **Design, art, and production**
- **Investigative journalism**
- **Photo journalism**
- **Subsidiary rights**
- **Freelance writing**

**PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

- American Journalism Review
- American Medical Writers Association
- American Society of Journalist and Scholars
- American Society of Media Photographers
- American Society of Newspaper Editors
- Association of Education and Journalism and Mass Communications
- Investigative Reporters and Editors
- Magazine Publishers of America
- Newspaper Association of America
- Online News Association
- Society for Technical Communication
- Society of Professional Journalists

**COMMON EMPLOYERS:**

- Local newspapers: Dailies, Alternative weeklies, Wire services, Trade newspapers, Online publishers, Major publishers, Consumer magazines, News magazines, Specialized magazines
- Mechanical and industrial publications, Professional publications/associations, Merchandising and trade publications, Labor unions, Academic journals, Corporate in-house publications

**STRATEGIES ON ENTERING THE FIELD**

- Obtain an internship or part-time job with a newspaper.
- Work with a college newspaper, yearbook, or alumni publication.
- Take an active role, preferably leadership, in journalism organizations.
- Develop excellent grammar and writing skills. Learn to think critically.
- Create a portfolio of writing samples, especially those that have been published.
- Seek opportunities for recognition and networking through writing contests and freelance writing submissions.
- Build relationships with campus and community leaders and athletes for interview opportunities and experience.